

September's Gold Medal School of the Month

## McMillan Elementary

Principal: Connie Buckner

School Coordinator: Kim Montrone

Mentor: Kim Kingery

Healthy choices abound at McMillan Elementary. Parents, teachers, and staff members consistently work together to ensure an unsurpassed level of dedication to the health and well being of McMillan students.



Perhaps the most memorable healthy tradition at McMillan is the annual Fit/Fun Walk/Run event each spring. Many former students and community members return to McMillan each year to participate in this highly-anticipated event, which sets a wonderful example to the children to remain physically fit and healthy. This large-scale community activity requires teamwork from all faculty and staff members (particularly that of the organizer, Mrs. Reynolds), PTA volunteers, and even the Murray City Police Department. McMillan students sign a contract to walk one, two or three miles. PTA members volunteer their time by setting up the three-mile course throughout Murray neighborhoods, and they also act as cheerleaders during the event. Parents donate money to provide medals and shirts to each and every student that completes his or her contract; in 2008, there were over \$2,000 in donations from parents and the community. Murray Police Officers are stationed throughout the course to ensure student safety. Community attention is drawn to the event by a live radio broadcast.

McMillan students walk all year long to prepare and build stamina for the Fit/Fun Walk/Run event. In fact, they have consistently walked more than 22,000 miles per year since joining the Gold Medal Schools program. During the 2007-2008 school year, students were motivated to walk the Gold Medal Mile as frequently as possible in order to reach the school goal of walking to Beijing, China, site of the 2008 Olympic Games. In order to make the contest fun and educational, there were 14 stop cities along the way, at each of which the students learned a little bit about the culture in that city. They reached Beijing by mid-year, and started on the return trip to Salt Lake City before the year ended. The creation of a paved walking track motivates the students to walk even more.

McMillan's dedication to the physical fitness and welfare of its students does not end with walking. Each year, the teachers, staff and parents plan a number of events to help the kids learn about healthy and safe choices. For example, last year, all students participated in a Safety Ride/Walk Day as part of McMillan's Safety Week. During this fun and educational event, students watched a safety video reviewing various safety points, such as the importance of wearing a bike helmet and parking lot safety rules. After the video, students met with a Murray bicycle officer who ensured that their bicycle helmets fit correctly. Then, all students had the opportunity to walk/ride around school grounds with Principal Connie Buckner and special guest, Murray Mayor Dan Snarr.



McMillan also recognizes Walk to School day each year. All students are invited to walk to school in honor of the event and wear their school colors while learning about and observing common safety rules. Parent volunteers are stationed at various checkpoints within each neighborhood, cheering students on for making healthy and safe choices.

In order to meet the Silver-level criteria in 2007-2008, a faculty and staff wellness program was implemented. However, McMillan did not stop with just one activity; instead, they held various wellness activities all year long! Teachers and staff members were invited to participate in volleyball games, yoga lessons, pedometer challenges, and more. They truly understand the importance of leading by example.

School Coordinator Kim Montrone says, "I love to see our students enjoying our newly paved lap track. It is fun to hear about all of the sports and activities they are involved in that help them to succeed at meeting their goals to be healthy!"